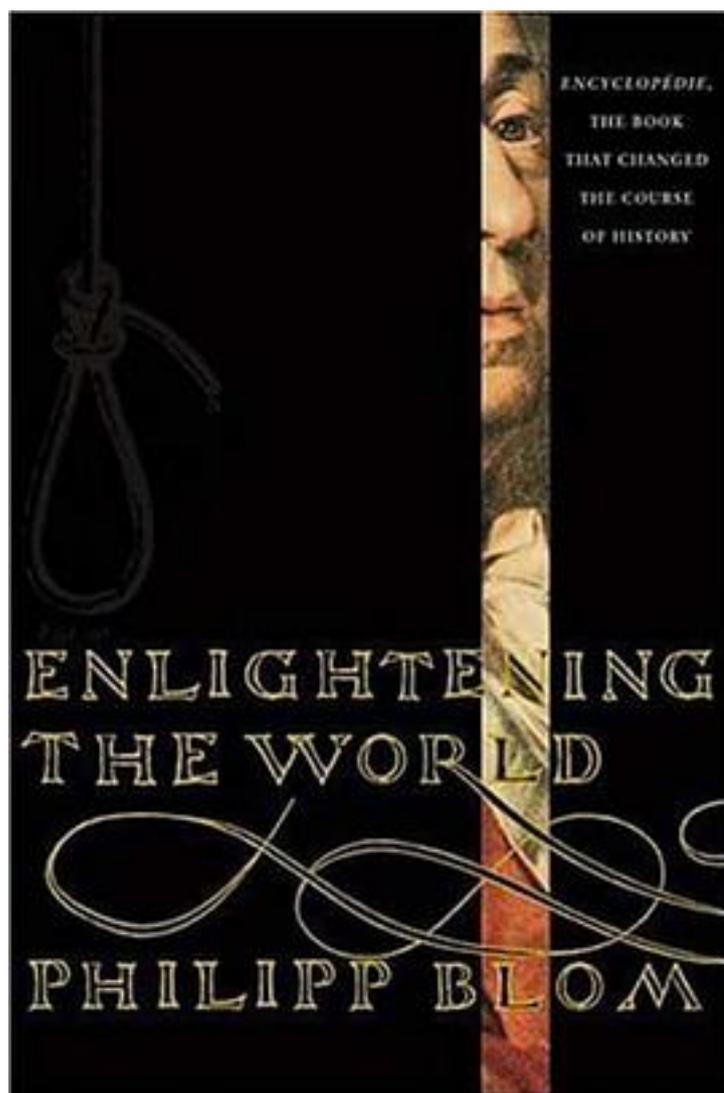


Enlightening the World



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In 1777 several of the world's greatest men gathered together to create a book that would champion rationalism, free thinking, and secularism--the Encyclopédie. Such leading minds as Diderot, Rousseau, and Voltaire conceived of a work that would tear down the social order dominated by the Crown and Church, a brave act at a time when heresy could still be punished by death. During the years it took to produce all twenty-seven volumes, the writers faced exile, jail, and censorship. But when they were done, they had created a book that would provide the foundation for the Enlightenment and change the world forever. Novelist and historian Philipp Blom presents the story behind the sixteen-year struggle to create the Encyclopédie, the men who wrote it, the powerful forces that tried to suppress it, and the tremendous impact it had on the world.

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